

News

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HIGHLIGHTS OF HOUSTON, TX NATIONAL COMPENSATION SURVEY DECEMBER 2002

Workers in the Houston, Texas, metropolitan area averaged \$19.02 per hour during December 2002, according to a new survey released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Regional Commissioner Bob Gaddie reported that white-collar workers averaged \$23.18 per hour and accounted for 56 percent of the workers in the area. Blue-collar employees averaged \$15.13 per hour and represented 28 percent of the workforce, while the remainder worked in service occupations and earned \$10.43 per hour. (See table 1.)

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) presents straight-time earnings for occupations in establishments with 50 or more workers in private industry and State and local governments. The survey excludes agricultural establishments, private households, the self-employed, and the Federal government. This NCS covered 628 firms representing 884,300 workers in the Houston metropolitan area, which is comprised of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller Counties in Texas. Seventy-seven percent of those represented worked in private industry.

In the Houston metropolitan area, average hourly wages were published for nearly 100 detailed occupations. (See table 1.) Among white-collar workers, petroleum engineers averaged \$46.77 per hour; pharmacists, \$38.47; and registered nurses, \$27.36. Blue-collar occupations included electricians at \$23.18 per hour; welders and cutters at 15.07; and bus drivers at \$14.48. In the service occupations, firefighters averaged \$17.48 per hour and correctional institutional officers, \$12.34.

Individual earnings within a broad occupational category may differ depending on the industry sector in which one works. For example, State and local government workers at \$20.52 per hour earned more than their counterparts in private industry (\$18.62). In contrast, private industry blue-collar workers (\$15.26) earned more than State and local government blue-collar workers (\$13.51). However, for some occupations, industry had little or no impact; hourly earnings for white-collar workers in State and local government at \$23.58 were essentially the same as those in private industry (\$23.05).

National Compensation Survey, Houston, TX, December 2002 (continued)

The NCS also provides broad coverage of selected occupational characteristics. (See tables 2 and 3.) For example, full-time employees in the Houston area averaged \$19.89 per hour, considerably more than part-timers at \$8.20. Union workers in blue-collar jobs averaged \$20.40 per hour, eclipsing their nonunion counterparts at \$13.43. Private industry workers at establishments with 500 or more employees averaged \$21.87 per hour, earning more than the \$16.27 average hourly wage of those in establishments employing 50-99 workers.

The NCS is part of a statistical program that integrates three previously separate surveys of wages and benefits into one comprehensive compensation program increasing the amount of data available. Data provided by the NCS may be used by businesses for establishing pay plans, making decisions concerning plant relocation, and in collective bargaining negotiations. Individuals may use such data to help choose potential careers. Average rates of pay are also available for levels of work within an occupation based on knowledge, skill, independent judgment, supervision received and other factors required on the job.

Survey Availability

Complete survey results are contained in the Houston, TX National Compensation Survey December 2002 (Bulletin 3120-15). While supplies last, single copies of the bulletin are available from the Dallas Information Office by calling 214-767-6970. In addition, data contained in the bulletin are available on the Internet in both text and PDF formats at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/compub.htm>. This release can also be obtained from the Bureau's fax-on-demand service in Dallas by dialing 214-767-9613 and requesting document 9530.

For personal assistance or further information on the National Compensation Survey, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Dallas Information Office at 214-767-6970 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

Technical Note

Because the NCS is a sample survey, it is subject to sampling errors. Sampling errors occur because observations come only from a sample and not from an entire population. The sample used for this survey is one of a number of possible samples of the same size that could have been selected using the sample design. Estimates derived from the different samples would differ from each other. A measure of the variation among these differing estimates is the standard error. It can be used to measure the precision with which an estimate from a particular sample approximates the expected result of all possible samples. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the survey differs from a complete population figure by less than the standard error. The chances are about 90 out of 100 that this difference would be less than 1.6 times the standard error. The statements of comparisons appearing in this publication are significant at a 1.6 standard error level or better. This means that for differences cited, the estimated difference is greater than 1.6 times the standard error of the difference.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings¹, all workers²: Selected occupations, private industry and State and local government, National Compensation Survey, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, December 2002

Occupation ³	Total		Private industry		State and local government	
	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)
All	\$19.02	2.6	\$18.62	3.2	\$20.52	3.4
All excluding sales	19.47	2.8	19.14	3.5	20.56	3.3
White collar	23.18	2.6	23.05	3.2	23.58	4.0
White collar excluding sales	24.81	2.7	25.29	3.4	23.66	3.9
Professional specialty and technical	29.93	2.7	30.76	3.9	28.49	2.6
Professional specialty	31.30	1.8	32.61	2.4	29.53	2.4
Engineers, architects, and surveyors	35.77	4.1	35.77	4.1	—	—
Petroleum engineers	46.77	6.2	46.77	6.2	—	—
Civil engineers	39.53	7.1	39.53	7.1	—	—
Engineers, n.e.c.	37.63	3.4	37.63	3.4	—	—
Mathematical and computer scientists	30.42	6.9	30.55	7.1	—	—
Computer systems analysts and scientists	30.42	6.9	30.55	7.1	—	—
Natural scientists	27.07	12.8	29.70	15.3	—	—
Geologists and geodesists	44.09	2.6	44.09	2.6	—	—
Health related	29.48	5.1	29.35	6.7	29.82	5.8
Registered nurses	27.36	2.1	26.95	2.7	28.41	2.3
Pharmacists	38.47	1.6	38.89	2.5	—	—
Teachers, college and university	49.28	12.2	—	—	44.71	12.7
Other post-secondary teachers	53.78	22.8	—	—	—	—
Teachers, except college and university	29.05	1.6	21.86	10.0	29.42	1.3
Elementary school teachers	29.14	.2	—	—	29.17	.1
Secondary school teachers	29.66	.9	—	—	29.60	.9
Teachers, n.e.c.	26.65	9.5	15.25	23.1	—	—
Vocational and educational counselors	31.03	5.3	—	—	31.80	4.4
Librarians, archivists, and curators	20.01	12.4	—	—	19.10	16.6
Librarians	20.00	12.4	—	—	19.10	16.6
Social scientists and urban planners	—	—	—	—	—	—
Social, recreation, and religious workers	15.81	6.0	—	—	16.05	5.2
Social workers	15.66	5.2	—	—	16.05	5.2
Lawyers and judges	—	—	—	—	—	—
Writers, authors, entertainers, athletes, and professionals, n.e.c.	24.60	19.7	24.30	22.6	—	—
Technical	25.00	10.0	26.25	11.1	18.11	7.7
Clinical laboratory technologists and technicians	18.99	10.2	18.94	10.5	—	—
Radiological technicians	24.90	17.1	—	—	—	—
Licensed practical nurses	16.08	1.1	16.20	1.3	—	—
Health technologists and technicians, n.e.c.	18.32	5.4	18.26	5.3	—	—
Electrical and electronic technicians	21.81	9.1	—	—	—	—
Engineering technicians, n.e.c.	25.98	12.0	27.55	12.6	—	—
Drafters	25.17	7.5	25.17	7.5	—	—
Technical and related, n.e.c.	18.05	12.9	—	—	—	—
Executive, administrative, and managerial	34.20	3.6	35.23	4.2	29.82	5.4
Executives, administrators, and managers	37.16	3.8	39.32	4.3	30.99	5.7
Administrators and officials, public administration	31.79	14.1	—	—	27.25	4.4
Financial managers	35.14	10.8	35.40	11.4	—	—
Managers, marketing, advertising, and public relations	40.29	11.0	40.29	11.0	—	—
Administrators, education and related fields	39.04	3.1	42.64	4.8	38.72	3.7
Managers and administrators, n.e.c.	39.13	5.2	41.36	5.5	—	—
Management related	28.37	5.8	28.92	6.0	—	—
Accountants and auditors	28.44	8.7	28.44	8.7	—	—
Other financial officers	46.63	15.9	46.63	15.9	—	—
Management analysts	22.83	17.3	22.83	17.3	—	—
Personnel, training, and labor relations specialists	26.16	14.9	—	—	—	—
Buyers, wholesale and retail trade, except farm products	34.80	23.9	34.80	23.9	—	—
Management related, n.e.c.	24.77	6.9	25.03	7.6	—	—
Sales	14.46	5.9	14.51	5.9	—	—
Supervisors, sales	23.30	10.0	23.30	10.0	—	—
Sales, other business services	15.88	14.8	15.88	14.8	—	—

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings(1), all workers(2): Selected occupations, private industry and State and local government, National Compensation Survey, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, December 2002 — Continued

Occupation ³	Total		Private industry		State and local government	
	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)
White collar —Continued						
Sales —Continued						
Sales representatives, mining, manufacturing, and wholesale	\$21.25	10.8	\$21.25	10.8	—	—
Sales workers, motor vehicles and boats	12.59	8.6	12.59	8.6	—	—
Sales workers, parts	18.97	4.5	18.97	4.5	—	—
Sales workers, other commodities	9.72	10.4	9.72	10.4	—	—
Cashiers	7.95	2.9	7.83	2.7	—	—
Administrative support, including clerical	13.30	2.2	13.67	2.6	\$12.21	2.6
Supervisors, general office	15.19	6.4	—	—	—	—
Supervisors, distribution, scheduling, and adjusting clerks	19.01	12.3	19.01	12.3	—	—
Secretaries	15.63	2.9	16.50	3.4	13.60	4.8
Receptionists	10.88	5.4	10.88	5.9	—	—
Information clerks, n.e.c.	13.39	8.3	13.50	9.0	—	—
Order clerks	13.28	15.5	13.28	15.5	—	—
Records clerks, n.e.c.	12.72	6.5	12.31	8.4	13.36	8.6
Bookkeepers, accounting and auditing clerks	13.21	4.1	13.23	4.3	—	—
Dispatchers	10.66	9.8	—	—	—	—
Production coordinators	18.80	11.4	—	—	—	—
Traffic, shipping and receiving clerks	12.41	7.9	12.19	8.1	—	—
Stock and inventory clerks	10.93	6.5	11.04	8.2	—	—
Investigators and adjusters, except insurance	16.64	8.8	16.82	9.2	—	—
General office clerks	12.97	4.4	14.30	5.8	11.26	2.7
Bank tellers	11.35	7.5	11.35	7.5	—	—
Data entry keyers	11.65	7.1	11.65	7.1	—	—
Administrative support, n.e.c.	13.50	5.0	13.46	6.7	13.60	3.5
Blue collar	15.13	3.8	15.26	4.1	13.51	5.3
Precision production, craft, and repair	19.10	4.3	19.40	4.6	15.33	5.5
Automobile mechanics	19.20	8.2	19.25	8.3	—	—
Bus, truck, and stationary engine mechanics	15.57	3.5	14.63	4.7	—	—
Industrial machinery repairers	16.96	3.8	17.07	4.2	—	—
Electronic repairers, communications and industrial equipment	15.43	20.5	15.43	20.5	—	—
Mechanics and repairers, n.e.c.	16.67	11.4	17.13	12.2	—	—
Electricians	23.18	6.2	23.50	6.5	—	—
Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters	16.40	11.2	17.04	13.5	—	—
Structural metal workers	13.77	6.7	13.77	6.7	—	—
Construction trades, n.e.c.	10.29	12.0	9.65	12.1	—	—
Supervisors, production	23.41	6.0	24.72	3.3	—	—
Machinists	18.94	8.1	18.94	8.1	—	—
Miscellaneous plant and system operators, n.e.c.	26.01	1.7	26.01	1.7	—	—
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	14.31	6.6	14.31	6.6	—	—
Miscellaneous machine operators, n.e.c.	17.17	10.7	17.17	10.7	—	—
Welders and cutters	15.07	5.5	15.07	5.5	—	—
Assemblers	10.47	3.7	10.47	3.7	—	—
Transportation and material moving	13.49	3.6	13.51	3.9	13.31	2.9
Truck drivers	14.97	12.0	15.07	12.2	—	—
Bus drivers	14.48	5.8	—	—	—	—
Industrial truck and tractor equipment operators ..	10.51	7.0	10.51	7.0	—	—
Miscellaneous material moving equipment operators, n.e.c.	16.24	7.7	16.46	7.9	—	—
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	10.46	3.0	10.36	3.2	11.37	3.9
Groundskeepers and gardeners, except farm	10.53	5.2	—	—	10.74	6.0
Helpers, mechanics and repairers	11.51	9.7	11.68	12.2	—	—
Helpers, construction trades	10.42	4.4	—	—	—	—
Production helpers	9.89	5.9	9.89	5.9	—	—
Stock handlers and baggers	8.30	6.7	8.30	6.7	—	—

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings¹, all workers²: Selected occupations, private industry and State and local government, National Compensation Survey, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, December 2002 — Continued

Occupation ³	Total		Private industry		State and local government	
	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)
Blue collar —Continued						
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers —Continued						
Freight, stock, and material handlers, n.e.c.	\$12.26	14.0	\$12.26	14.0	—	—
Vehicle washers and equipment cleaners	9.91	10.5	9.85	10.9	—	—
Hand packers and packagers	10.04	22.7	10.04	22.7	—	—
Laborers, except construction, n.e.c.	11.12	12.8	10.90	15.0	—	—
Service	10.43	3.3	8.16	5.0	\$14.66	2.5
Protective service	16.11	4.0	9.47	6.3	18.66	2.8
Firefighting	17.48	1.0	—	—	17.48	1.0
Police and detectives, public service	20.86	4.6	—	—	20.86	4.6
Sheriffs, bailiffs, and other law enforcement officers	25.96	9.7	—	—	25.96	9.7
Correctional institution officers	12.34	1.8	—	—	12.34	1.8
Food service	7.07	7.8	6.80	9.4	8.73	2.2
Waiters, waitresses, and bartenders	4.31	5.8	4.31	5.8	—	—
Waiters and waitresses	3.64	19.6	3.64	19.6	—	—
Other food service	8.19	3.7	8.06	4.8	8.73	2.2
Cooks	8.52	5.4	8.52	5.4	—	—
Kitchen workers, food preparation	7.63	8.6	7.51	9.0	—	—
Food preparation, n.e.c.	7.74	8.0	7.01	12.9	8.77	2.1
Health service	9.85	8.8	8.45	10.9	12.29	5.0
Health aides, except nursing	11.91	4.4	9.50	1.8	13.16	7.4
Nursing aides, orderlies and attendants	8.89	10.4	8.14	11.3	11.26	2.9
Cleaning and building service	8.07	4.0	7.56	3.8	9.85	1.7
Maids and housemen	6.86	3.2	6.86	3.3	—	—
Janitors and cleaners	8.17	7.1	7.29	7.0	9.89	1.8
Personal service	13.73	15.8	14.77	20.2	11.42	9.7
Public transportation attendants	28.33	8.3	—	—	—	—
Service, n.e.c.	11.01	18.4	—	—	—	—

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² All workers include full-time and part-time workers.

³ A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy.

⁴ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria, and n.e.c. means "not elsewhere classified." Overall occupational groups may include data for categories not shown separately.

Table 2. Selected worker characteristics: Mean hourly earnings¹ by occupational group², National Compensation Survey, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, December 2002

Occupational group	Private industry and State and local government					
	Full-time workers ³	Part-time workers ³	Union ⁴	Nonunion ⁴	Time ⁵	Incentive ⁵
	Mean					
All occupations	\$19.89	\$8.20	\$21.33	\$18.78	\$19.09	\$17.29
All excluding sales	20.23	8.45	21.71	19.22	19.46	20.17
White collar	23.78	10.78	25.82	23.10	23.54	16.99
White-collar excluding sales	25.01	15.91	29.06	24.68	24.79	29.03
Professional specialty and technical	30.06	23.07	102.64	29.09	29.93	—
Professional specialty	31.48	23.51	—	31.30	31.30	—
Technical	25.05	—	102.64	20.68	25.00	—
Executive, administrative, and managerial	34.22	—	—	34.20	34.23	—
Sales	15.96	7.22	8.55	14.65	13.65	16.12
Administrative support, including clerical	13.38	11.23	13.35	13.30	13.29	—
Blue collar	15.49	7.79	20.40	13.43	15.03	18.23
Precision production, craft, and repair	19.29	—	22.60	17.30	19.06	19.63
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	14.32	—	21.80	12.72	14.31	—
Transportation and material moving	13.86	—	18.47	11.72	13.47	—
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	10.84	7.68	11.77	10.29	10.44	—
Service	11.72	6.43	19.49	10.06	10.43	—
	Relative error ⁶ (percent)					
All occupations	2.8	3.2	7.4	2.8	2.7	6.2
All excluding sales	3.0	4.3	7.3	2.9	2.8	9.6
White collar	2.7	5.4	31.4	2.4	2.7	8.4
White-collar excluding sales	2.8	6.8	35.0	2.4	2.7	38.0
Professional specialty and technical	2.7	6.8	7.3	2.2	2.7	—
Professional specialty	1.7	6.8	—	1.8	1.8	—
Technical	10.0	—	7.3	3.2	10.0	—
Executive, administrative, and managerial	3.6	—	—	3.6	3.6	—
Sales	6.2	1.6	22.4	5.9	7.0	7.9
Administrative support, including clerical	2.3	6.1	9.6	2.2	2.2	—
Blue collar	3.9	8.7	2.9	4.2	4.0	6.4
Precision production, craft, and repair	4.3	—	4.0	5.5	4.6	.7
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	6.5	—	4.1	5.2	6.6	—
Transportation and material moving	4.3	—	7.9	4.5	3.8	—
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	3.6	9.1	9.5	4.1	3.0	—
Service	4.6	5.4	17.2	3.0	3.3	—

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy. See appendix B for more information (from full publication).

³ Employees are classified as working either a full-time or a part-time schedule based on the definition used by each establishment. Therefore, a worker with a 35-hour-per-week schedule might be considered a full-time employee in one establishment, but classified as part-time in another firm, where a 40-hour week is the minimum full-time schedule.

⁴ Union workers are those whose wages are determined through collective bargaining.

⁵ Time workers' wages are based solely on an hourly rate or salary; incentive workers are those whose wages are at least partially based on productivity payments such as piece rates, commissions, and production bonuses.

⁶ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate. For more information about RSEs, see appendix A in full publication.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria.

Table 3. Establishment employment size: Mean hourly earnings¹ by occupational group², private industry, National Compensation Survey, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria, TX, December 2002

Occupational group	Full-time and part-time workers				
	All private industry workers	50 - 99 workers ³	100 workers or more		
			Total	100 - 499 workers	500 workers or more
	Mean				
All occupations	\$18.62	\$16.27	\$19.08	\$16.23	\$21.87
All excluding sales	19.14	16.35	19.67	16.83	22.14
White collar	23.05	22.27	23.17	19.93	25.76
White-collar excluding sales	25.29	24.93	25.34	23.20	26.61
Professional specialty and technical	30.76	28.30	30.94	28.42	32.33
Professional specialty	32.61	31.02	32.71	30.47	33.99
Technical	26.25	24.60	26.42	22.64	28.31
Executive, administrative, and managerial	35.23	35.75	35.09	35.81	34.79
Sales	14.51	15.78	14.21	13.19	17.15
Administrative support, including clerical	13.67	12.95	13.78	13.74	13.81
Blue collar	15.26	12.52	16.01	14.03	18.86
Precision production, craft, and repair	19.40	14.96	20.48	18.01	23.35
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	14.31	13.23	14.54	12.32	17.77
Transportation and material moving	13.51	12.31	13.98	12.93	15.37
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	10.36	8.58	10.88	10.47	11.84
Service	8.16	6.91	8.38	7.58	9.10
	Relative error ⁴ (percent)				
All occupations	3.2	9.2	3.4	6.2	3.8
All excluding sales	3.5	10.0	3.6	7.1	3.8
White collar	3.2	11.7	3.4	6.9	3.6
White-collar excluding sales	3.4	14.5	3.7	7.9	3.9
Professional specialty and technical	3.9	10.1	3.9	9.0	5.5
Professional specialty	2.4	12.0	2.3	10.2	4.1
Technical	11.1	12.4	12.1	3.4	17.2
Executive, administrative, and managerial	4.2	10.6	4.7	9.6	4.2
Sales	5.9	11.0	5.8	7.4	6.5
Administrative support, including clerical	2.6	6.9	2.9	4.7	3.4
Blue collar	4.1	6.8	4.4	3.1	4.8
Precision production, craft, and repair	4.6	11.0	4.8	4.8	4.7
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	6.6	3.5	7.7	5.6	7.3
Transportation and material moving	3.9	6.7	5.7	5.9	11.0
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	3.2	8.0	3.6	5.2	10.4
Service	5.0	13.0	5.4	6.1	9.1

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy. See appendix B in full publication for more information.

³ Establishments classified with 50-99 workers may contain

establishments with fewer than 50 due to staff reductions between survey sampling and collection.

⁴ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate. For more information about RSEs, see appendix A in full publication.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria.